Government & Industry Relations Committee (GIRCom) MINUTES January 14, 2019

Committee Members: Bonnie Potter, Chair
Deborah Bailey [absent]
Joan Clappier
Dr. Pat Long
Brion Smoker

Board Liaison: Andy Merriwether

Staff Representative: Dan Huntley

The meeting was called to order at 7:31 pm ET.

Meeting Opening

1.1 AOA News of Importance — Merriwether/Huntley

- The Budget is completed.
- The Board will meet tomorrow to finalize the Strategic Plan
- Nationals: Registration is open and they are working on lining up sponsors and vendors.
- Nomination committee is in place. Goal is to have elections a bit sooner so that new directors can get orientation before the first board meeting.

2.0 Health/Government Related

2.1 USAHA Alerts — Long / Potter

- Nothing that directly affects alpaca. Things that don't appear to affect alpacas but we are paying attention to them
  - Chicken disease: Virulent Newcastle disease
  - African Swine Disease has been seen in Europe and China
- Pat is following how the USDA is reacting to foreign diseases
- There is a shortage of large animal practitioners
- There is continued talk about animal welfare requirements
- Animal disease traceability is getting a bit more mention, primary in cattle, pigs, horses

3.0 Unfinished Business

3.1 Alpaca Business Benchmarks Status — Potter/Merriwether

- The GIRCom submission was approved unanimously by the Board in mid-December.
- Next step is to get it formatted into an online fill-in-the-blanks format and notify the members. Dan will talk to De about doing that.

3.2 Education of State/County Officials Status — Potter/Merriwether

- Our.Alpacagram went out mid-December to the membership. We received suggestions for a couple of additions from a member: (1) Emphasize that they are herd animals and being with other alpacas is

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important, and (2) they are cud-chewers. We did say that they chew cud, but if we do a revision we might describe it as a sideways figure-8 chewing motion.

3.3 ELD Mandate/Farm Bill Update — Potter

- Congress passed the Farm Bill on December 20. Alpacas were determined to be livestock by the Ag Secretary when the 2008 Farm Bill was passed. The new Farm Bill reinforces that and makes it a bit more obvious by including alpacas in the "Definition" of livestock.
- Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration has listed some Ag Exemptions to the ELD rules for people transporting livestock. For example, the mandatory wait time is not required when hauling livestock. GIRCom will put out this information in an AlpacaGram with a link to the site, since there are some differences based on weight of vehicle and other considerations.

3.4 IRS and State Tax Audits — Smoker

- The only new inquiry has been someone who wants to set up a tax-exempt non-profit and donate the fleece. This is beyond GIRCom's scope.

3.5 Agritourism … How Can We Help Our Members? — Potter/All

- Brion sent the Committee a link to Apple Mountain Alpacas/Jay Reeder's extensive information about agritourism.
- The recently published Alpaca Owners Guide has an article about it
- We can provide the members with the link to the website with agritourism laws per state
- Bonnie will talk to Jay Reeder to see if it is OK with him for AOA to provide a link to the agritourism information on his website.

4.0 New Business

4.1 Any Direction From Board Based on the updated Strategic Plan? — Merriwether.

- Plan is approaching final approval, after which they will decide what they would like committees to work on.

5.0 Approval of Minutes (Minutes for approval: 11-12-18) — Potter/Clappier

A motion to approve the minutes of 11-12-2018 was made by Pat and seconded by Joan. Motion passed.
Note: There are no minutes for December 2018 because there was not a quorum.

5.0 Meeting Wrap

6.1 Review Action Items — Potter

- Bonnie - write up Farm Bill/ELD alpacagram.
- Wait to see if there are more comments/suggestions about the "Education" document before revising it.
- Bonnie – talk to Jay Reeder about directing people to his agritourism information.

6.2 Next Meeting Date will be: 2/11/2019 at 7:30pm ET. — Potter

6.3 Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 8:06 pm ET. — Potter